



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 8**

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**Date:** 10/15/2009

**From:** Tien H. Nguyen, OSC  
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8PAER-EPR-ER

**To:** EPA Headquarters  
John Irizarry  
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**Subject:** POLREP # 1, Initial POLREP  
Highway 89 Storage Units Site  
2100 Hwy 89, Perry, UT 84302 and  
8823 Hwy 89, S. Willard, UT 84340  
Perry/S. Willard, Box Elder County, Utah  
Latitude: 41° 27' 48" and 41° 24' 30"  
Longitude: 112° 02' 04" and 112° 02' 10"

**ABSTRACT**

Site #: 08SK  
NPL Status: NA  
CERCLIS ID #: UTN 000802790  
Reporting Period: 10/09/09 to 10/15/09  
Contaminant of Concern:  
Action Memo. Date: NA  
Removal Mob. Date: NA  
DO#:

Response Authority: CERCLA  
Incident Category: Fund-lead  
RCRIS ID#:  
Response Type: Classic Emergency  
Contaminated Area: Storage units  
Start Date: 10/09/09  
Removal Compl. Date: TBD  
Removal Ceiling: NA

**1.1.1 Incident Category: Fund Lead**

This classic emergency removal was initiated on October 9, 2009, after the Region 8 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA/8) received notification from the Box Elder County Sheriffs Office (the County) that numerous drums and containers of old chemicals, used to make rocket propellants, were found in storage units at two locations in the towns of Perry and South Willard, in Utah. It is suspected that the chemicals were obtained or purchased by an individual during his employment with Thiokol. EPA/8 deployed an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) and START team contractors to the location to assist the County with site assessment and to determine the nature and extent of situation and appropriate response action(s).

## 1.1.2 Site Description

### 1.1.2.1 Location

The Highway 89 Storage Units Site is located at two locations: 2100 Hwy 89, Perry, UT 84302 and 8823 Hwy 89, S. Willard, UT 84340 in Box Elder County, Utah. In addition, as of October 15, 2009, the individual's residence is a third location to be assessed for hazardous materials (see Section 2.1.2).

### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The individual, who is currently retired and in his late 80s, apparently collected materials from Thiokol during his employment there, including propellant materials such as binders, oxidizers, highly dangerous reactive materials, and flammable liquids and fuels, which he stored in seven rental storage units at the two aforementioned locations. These chemicals are improperly packaged and show evidence of being at the storage units for quite some time; the individual retired from Thiokol in the 1980s.

## 1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

The County Sheriff's detective escorted the OSC and START team to visit the seven suspected storage units. All these storage units are haphazardly stacked with drums, containers, and bags of chemicals as well as other items like equipment, merchandise, furniture and other trash/junk. Some units are with strong odors of chemical vapors.

### 2.1.1 Narrative: N/A

### 2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

The Site has been fenced and secured 24/7 by the local police departments. By Oct. 10, 2009, more than 100 drums and containers had been inventoried and categorized, which were found to contain various chemicals including flammable liquids, highly reactive metals such as magnesium and aluminum powders, and oxidizers. One drum was half-full of solid high-energy slow-burning rocket propellant and black powder. At EPA's request, this drum was immediately picked up and detonated by the County Bomb Squad in a nearby field.

On Oct. 14, 2009, the County Sheriff office notified the OSCs that additional chemicals were found at the Thiokol employee's residence. The detective requested EPA conduct assessment of this residence as soon as possible. The OSC and START contractors visited the residence with County police escort today, Oct. 15, 2009. The residence was also found to contain numerous chemicals that are improperly stored or are in damaged or inappropriate containers.

### 2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identifications of PRPs

The Site is being investigated under the warrant obtained by the Box Elder County's Criminal Division per their delegated authorities. The County has been investigating the personal residence as well (that of the former Thiokol employee who rented the storage units).

At this time, other PRPs (Potentially Responsible Parties) have not been identified. EPA's response and site assessment will likely result in an inventory of chemicals found at the storage units and the residence, which will be used to determine other responsible parties and their potential liability under environmental Statutes. Due to the uncertainty of chemicals present (the type or their origin), Thiokol representatives have not been contacted at this time. EPA will likely make this and related notifications when a better understanding of the situation is obtained and inventory of the containers is more developed.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics: N/A

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

EPA's START contractor and County Haz-Mat teams will continue inventory and categorization of the containers located at the storage units and the residence during the week of October 12 and it is anticipated that this work will continue into the following week. Due to the uncertainty of chemicals present (the type or their origin), Thiokol representatives have not been contacted at this time. EPA will likely make this and related notifications when a better understanding of the situation is obtained and inventory of the containers is more developed.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

Develop a complete inventory of chemicals present on Site and at the residence to allow for safe segregation of these materials. EPA plans to have its ERRS contractor on Site next week to initiate a plan for transportation and disposal of the chemicals.

2.2.2 Issues: None